

Message Text

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63

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 AID-20 PC-04 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-11

INR-10 LAB-06 NSAE-00 RSC-01 SIL-01 DODE-00 PA-03

USIA-15 PRS-01 HUD-02 RSR-01 /096 W

----- 087618

R 142155Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8241

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PN, ELAB

SUBJECT: GOP RULES CONSTRUCTION WORKERS STRIKE ILLEGAL

REF: PANAMA 4280

1. CITING UNION FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH THE PRE-STRIKE PROCEDURES REQUIRED BY LABOR CODE, MINISTER OF LABOR MURGAS HAS RULED THAT GENERAL STRIKE BY PANAMA CITY AREA CONSTRUCTION WORKERS "OBVIOUSLY AND OPENLY" ILLEGAL. IN VIEW OF RULING, AN EARLY RETURN TO WORK SEEMS ASSURED.

2. IN ANNOUNCING DECISION YESTERDAY, AUGUST 13, MURGAS ADMONISHED BOTH PARTIES TO WORK OUT THEIR DIFFERENCES AT THE NEGOTIATING TALBE. HE ROUNDLY CRITICIZED THE SINDICATO UNICO NACIONAL DE TRABAJADORES DE LA CONSTRUCCION FOR CALLING GENERAL STRIKE, AND ADVISED WORKERS TO GO BACK TO WORK AT ONCE, POINTEDLY QUOTING PORTIONS OF THE LABOR CODE WHICH CALL FOR FINES OF UP TO \$500 FOR INCITING ILLEGAL STRIKES. AT THE SAME TIME THE MINISTER REFERRED TO THE ON-GOING AND LEGAL STRIKE INVOLVING THREE LOCAL FIRMS (SEE REFTTEL) AND STATED THAT THE MINISTRY HAS FOUND CERTAIN VIOLATIONS OF THE LABOR CODE.

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3. WHILE GENERAL STRIKE NOW OFF, NO EARLY RESOLUTION
OF THE UNDERLYING ISSUES IS IN SIGHT. LABOR'S DEMANDS
FOR FULL COMPLIANCE WITH THE LABOR CODE AND INDUSTRY WIDE
UMBRELLA AGREEMENTS, TOGETHER WITH EMPLOYER'S INSISTANCE
THAT THE LABOR CODE BE AMENDED TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT
THE SPECIAL PROBLEMS OF THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY, WILL
LIKELY REQUIRE A GOOD DEAL OF TIME TO RESOLVE.

4. WRAP-UP AND ADDITIONAL COMMENTS WILL FOLLOW BY
AIRGRAM.
THOMPSON

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 14 AUG 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973PANAMA04305
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: PANAMA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730839/aaaabcbgc.tel
Line Count: 72
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: PANAMA 4280
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23 JAN 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <23-Jan-2002 by martinml>; APPROVED <12 FEB 2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: GOP RULES CONSTRUCTION WORKERS STRIKE ILLEGAL
TAGS: ELAB, PN
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005